(b) and (c) Different organisations/agencies have conducted studies on the Indian Retail sector using varying methodology for analysis and growth projection of the organised retail sector. This Department is not aware of the projections on the share of organised retail trade made by Deloitte Haskins and Sells.

New industrial licence in the Tobacco Sector

1710. SHRI SYED AZEEZ PASHA: Will the Minister of COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government is not allowing any new industrial license in Tobacco sector; and

(b) if so, the reasons for not allowing new industrial license in the sector?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENT OF INDUSTRIAL POLICY AND PROMOTION, MINISTRY OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY (SHRI ASHWANI KUMAR): (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. The manufacture of cigars and cigarettes using tobacco is subject to compulsory industrial licensing. However, Government is not encouraging setting up of new units for the manufacture of cigarettes on public health considerations.

Pursuing FTA's indiscriminately

1711. SHRI RAHUL BAJAJ:
SHRI RAJKUMAR DHOOT:

Will the Minister of COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government is pursuing Free Trade Agreement's indiscriminately; and

(b) if so, the details of experience of relative gains from the India-Singapore and India-Thailand FTAs?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE, MINISTRY OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY (SHRI JAIRAM RAMESH): (a) No, Sir. Before entering into negotiations with its trading partners, studies are undertaken internally, as well as through joint study groups to study the feasibility of the proposed FTAs, including their impact on the domestic industry. Consultations are also held with the domestic stakeholders including the Apex Chambers of Commerce and Industry, industry associations as well as the administrative Ministries and Departments. In order to protect the interests of the domestic industry, these Agreements provide for maintaining sensitive/negative lists of items on which limited or no tariff concessions are granted under the FTA. In addition, in case of a surge in imports and injury to the domestic industry, a country is allowed to take measures such as antidumping and safeguards.

(b) India's trade with its FTA partners is increasing steadily.

A Comprehensive Economic Cooperation Agreement (CECA) between India and Singapore was signed on 29th June, 2005 and has become operational with effect from 1-8-2005. India-Singapore bilateral trade increased from US $ 6.65 billion in 2004-05 to US $ 15.49 billion in 2007-08 at a compounded annual growth rate of 32.53%.

Under the India-Thailand Framework Agreement for the establishment of a comprehensive Free Trade Area, an Early Harvest Scheme (EHS) under which 82 common items of export interest to both the countries have been identified and tariffs on these items have been eliminated by both countries during 2004-2006. India-Thailand bilateral trade increased from US $ 1.44 billion in 2003-04 to US $ 4.11 billion in 2007-08 at a compounded annual growth rate of 30%.

Study on impact of big retail sector on small traders by ICRIER

1712. SHRI M.V. MYSURA REDDY: Will the Minister of COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Indian Council for Research on International Economic Relations (ICRIER) conducted a study on impact of big retail on small traders in India;

(b) whether it is also a fact that ICRIER recommendations are lopsided and are in favour of larger retailers;

(c) whether it is also a fact that ICRIER said that collection of tax from organized retailers in easier;

(d) will the Government kill small retails vendors in the country just to earn revenue in the form of tax and throw the small vendors on road; and

(e) if so, the reaction of the Government?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENT OF INDUSTRIAL POLICY AND PROMOTION, MINISTRY OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY (SHRI ASHWANI KUMAR): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) and (c) The study assigned to the Indian Council for Research on International Economic Relations (ICRIER) was for analysing the impact of organised retail on small retailers, employment, consumers, farmers and manufacturers, prices and overall economic growth. ICRIER's findings are based on a survey conducted across 10 cities covering unorganised retailers, consumers, intermediaries, farmers, manufacturers and modern retailers. The findings have brought out certain advantages of organised retail which, *inter-alia*, include improvement of Government revenues.

(d) and (e) Government is fully aware of the concerns of all stakeholders on the impact of organised retail on small retailers and vendors and fully recognises the need for ensuring that small retailers are not adversely affected by the growing organised retail. The findings of the ICRIER study will be considered in the light of all relevant factors taken in their entirety.

Assistance to labour intensive industries

†1713. DR. MURLI MANOHAR JOSHI:
SHRI RAM JETHMALANI:

Will the Minister of COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

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†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.